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HAMLET,

PRINCE OF DENMARK,

A TRAGEDY, BY SHAKESPEARE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres-Royal.

Regulated from the PROMPT-BOOK.

BY PERMISSION OF THE MANAGERS.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES,

CRITICAL AND ILLUSTRATIVE.

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Hamlet.

INTRODUCTION.

Hamlet is one of our first-rate dramatic productions; it contains many unparalleled beauties, with some egregious blemishes. As originally written, it must take up four hours in action; however, from this, as well as all his plays, it may be surmised, that the vitiated taste of Shakespeare's audience required occasional trifling; that, going to the play so early as at four o'clock, they did not mind an hour extraordinary, and possibly wanted as much as they could get for money. The plot of this, is rather irregularly carried on, and the winding up exceeding lame; the Dramatic Censor points out this, more at large. Therefore, reference is made to that work, for further information. The principal character, which makes it a great weight for an actor to bear, is not only the chief, but sole support; however, he is furnished with excellent materials for that purpose.

*** The lines marked "thus" are generally omitted.

ACT I.

An open Place before the Palace.

Enter BERNARDO *and* FRANCISCO, *two Centinels.**

BERNARDO.

WHO's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold [yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, *Francisco.*

Fran. For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold, And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

* The opening of this tragedy is happily preparative to the future incidents and subject.

Ber. Well, good-night. If you do meet *Horatio*, and *Marcellus*, the rivals of my watch, bid them make haſte.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, hoa! who's there?
Hor. Friends to this ground.
Mar. And liege-men to the Dane.
Fran. Good-night. [you?
Mar. Farewel, honeſt ſoldier. Who hath reliev'd
Fran. *Bernardo* has my place: good-night. [*Ex.* Fr.
Mar. Holla! *Bernado!*
Ber. Say, what, is *Horatio* there?
Hor. A piece of him.
Ber. Welcome, *Horatio:* welcome, good *Marcellus.*
Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again, to-night?
Ber. I have ſeen nothing.
Mar. *Horatio* ſays, 'tis but a phantaſy,
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching the dreadful ſight, twice ſeen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him, along
With us, to watch the minutes of this night,
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and ſpeak to it.
Hor. 'Twill not appear.
Ber. Come, let us once again aſſail your ears,
That are ſo fortified againſt our ſtory,
What we have two nights ſeen.
Hor. Well, let us hear *Bernardo* ſpeak of this.
Ber. Laſt night of all,
When yon ſame ſtar, that weſtward from the Pole,
Had made his courſe to enlighten that part of heaven,
Where now it burns, *Marcellus* and myſelf,
The bell then beating one—
Mar. Peace, break thee off—

Enter GHOST.

Look where it comes again.
Ber. In the ſame figure, like the King that's dead.
Mar. Speak to it, *Horatio.*
Ber. Looks it not like the King?
Hor. Moſt like: it ſtartles me with fear and wonder.
Ber. It would be ſpoke to.
Mar. Speak to it, *Horatio.*

Hor. What art thou, that uſurp'ſt this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form,
In which the majeſty of bury'd Denmark
Did ſometimes march? I charge thee ſpeak.
Mar. It is offended.
Ber. See! it ſtalks away.
Hor. Stay, ſpeak, ſpeak: I charge thee ſpeak.
[*Exit* Ghoſt.
Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not anſwer.
Ber. How now, *Horatio?* you tremble and look pale.
Is not this ſomething more than phantaſy?
What think you of it?
Hor. I could not this believe,
Without the ſenſible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.
Mar. Is it not like the King?
Hor. As thou art to thyſelf:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When th'ambitious Norway he combated.
Mar. Thus twice before, and juſt at the ſame hour,
With martial ſtalk, hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not,
But in the ſcope of mine opinion,
This bodes ſome ſtrange eruption to our ſtate.
Mar. Pray tell me, he that knows,
Why this ſame ſtrict and moſt obſervant watch
So nightly toils the ſubjects of the land?
And makes the night joint labourer of the day?
Who is't that can inform me?
Hor. That can I; our laſt King,
Whoſe image e'en but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbraſs of Norway,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valient *Hamlet*
Did ſlay this Fortinbraſs; who, by ſeal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit (with his life) all theſe his lands,
Which he ſtood ſeiz'd of, to the conqueror:
Now, Sir, young Fortinbraſs,
Of unimproved mettle, hot and full,
Hath, in the ſkirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd up a liſt of lawleſs reſolutes,
To recover thoſe aforeſaid lands

So by his father loſt. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations.
Ber. I think it is no other, but even ſo.

Enter GHOST *again.*

Hor. But ſoft! behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll croſs it, tho' it blaſt me. Stay, illuſion!
[*Spreading his arms.*
If thou haſt any ſound, or uſe of voice,
Speak to me—If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do eaſe, and grace to me,
Speak to me.
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which happily foreknowing may avoid, O ſpeak!
Or if thou haſt uphoarded in thy life,
Extorted treaſure in the womb of earth,
For which, they ſay, you ſpirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*
Speak of it. Stay and ſpeak—Stop it, *Marcellus.*
Mar. 'Tis gone— [*Exit* Ghoſt.
We do it wrong, being ſo majeſtical,
To offer it the ſhew of violence;
It is ever, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
Ber. It was about to ſpeak, when the cock crew.
Hor. And then it ſtarted like a guilty thing,
Upon a fearful ſummons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his loſty and ſhrill ſounding throat,
Awake the god of day: and at his warning,
Whether in ſea or fire, in earth or air,
Th' extravagant and erring ſpirit hies
To his confine*.
But look, the morn, in ruſſet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eaſtern hill;
Break we our watch up, and by my advice
Let us impart what we have ſeen to-night,
Unto young *Hamlet*: perhaps
This ſpirit, dumb to us, will ſpeak to him.

* The former part of this ſpeech, though founded on a ſuperſtitious opinion, we muſt be pleaſed with; the latter is beautifully poetical.

SCENE II. *The Palace.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, *Gentlemen, and Guards.*

King. Tho' yet of *Hamlet* our dear brother's death,
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet ſo far hath diſcretion fought with nature,
That we with wiſeſt ſorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourſelves.
Therefore, our ſometimes ſiſter, now our queen,
Th' imperial jointreſs to this warlike ſtate,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,
Taken to wife. Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wiſdom, which have freely gone
With this affair along.
But now, *Laertes*, what's the news with you?
You told us of ſome ſuit. What is't, *Laertes?*

Laer. My dear Lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence, tho' willingly I came to Denmark,
To ſhew my duty in your coronation;
Yet now I muſt confeſs, that duty done,
My thoughts and wiſhes bend again tow'rds France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and favour.

King. Have you your father's leave? what ſays *Polonius?*

Pol. He hath, my Lord, by labourſome petition,
Wrung from me my ſlow leave; and at the laſt,
Upon his will I ſeal'd my hard conſent:
I do beſeech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, *Laertes*; time be thine,
And thy beſt graces ſpend it at thy will.
But now, my couſin *Hamlet*, and my ſon—

Ham. A little more than kin, and leſs than kind.

King. How is it, that the clouds ſtill hang on you?

Ham. Not ſo, my Lord; I am too much i' th' ſun.

Queen. Good *Hamlet*, caſt thy nightly colour off,
And let thine eye look a friend on Denmark;
Do not, for ever, with thy veiled lids,
Seek for thy noble father in the duſt;
Thou know'ſt 'tis common, all that live muſt die,
Paſſing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why ſeems it ſo particularly with thee?

Ham. *Seems*, madam! nay, it is; I know not *ſeems*.
'Tis not alone this mourning ſuit, good mother,
Together with all forms, modes, ſhapes of grief,
That can denote me truly. Theſe indeed *ſeem*,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within, which paſſeth ſhew;
Theſe but the trappings, and the ſuits of woe.

King. 'Tis ſweet and commendable in your nature, *Hamlet*,
To give theſe mourning duties to your father:
But you muſt know, your father loſt a father,
That father his, and the ſurvivor bound,
In filial obligation, for ſome term,
To do obſequious ſorrow. But to perſevere
In obſtinate condolement, does expreſs
An impious ſtubborneſs.
We pray you throw to earth
This unavailing woe, and think of us,
As of a father; and let the world take note,
You are the moſt immediate to our throne,
Our chiefeſt courtier, couſin, and our ſon.

Queen. Let not thy mother loſe her prayers, *Hamlet*;
I pray thee ſtay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I ſhall in all my beſt obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourſelf in Denmark. Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of *Hamlet*
Sits ſmiling at my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks, to-day,
But the great canon to the clouds ſhall tell it. [*Ex.*

Manet HAMLET.*

Ham. O that this too, too ſolid fleſh would melt,
Thaw, and reſolve itſelf into a dew!
Or that the Everlaſting had not fix'd
His cannon 'gainſt ſelf-murder!
How weary, ſtale, and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uſes of this world!

* This ſoliloquy is admirably adapted to the ſituation of Hamlet's mind; which is oppreſſed with grief, for the loſs of a father, and the ſudden and ſtrange ſecond marriage of his mother.

Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead? nay, not so much! not two—
So excellent a king,
So loving to my mother,
That he permitted not the winds of heav'n to
Visit her face too roughly!
Why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; yet within a month!
Let me not think—frailty, thy name is woman!
A little month!—or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears—she—
Married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules.
It is not, nor it cannot come to good.
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, *and* MARCELLUS*.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!
Ham. I'm glad to see you well,
Horatio, or I do forget myself.
Hor. The same, my Lord, and your poor servant ever.
Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you;
And what makes you from Wittenberg, *Horatio?*
Marcellus?—
Mar. My good Lord!
Ham. I'm very glad to see you; good morning, Sir,
But what, in faith, makes you from Wittenberg?
Hor. A truant disposition, good my Lord.
Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do my ear that violence,
To be a witness of your own report,
Against yourself. I know you are no truant;
But what is your affair in Elsinoor!
We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.
Hor. My Lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

* This scene unfolds the circumstance of the Ghost to Hamlet, happily, and his interrogative curiosity is highly in nature.

Ham. I pr'ythee do not mock me, fellow ſtudent; I think it was to ſee my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my Lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, *Horatio*; the funeral bak'd meats Did coldly furniſh forth the marriage tables. Would I had met my direſt foe in heav'n, Ere I had ſeen that day, *Horatio!* My father—methinks I ſee my father.

Hor. Where, my Lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, *Horatio.*

Hor. I ſaw him once; he was a good King.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all, I ſhall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My Lord, I think I ſaw him, yeſternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. The King your father!

Ham. The King my father!

Hor. Defer your admiration, for a while, With an attentive ear; till I deliver, Upon the witneſs of theſe gentlemen, This wonder to you.

Ham. Pray let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had theſe gentlemen, *Marcellus* and *Bernardo*, on their watch, In the dead waſte and middle of the night, Been thus encounter'd; a figure like your father, Arm'd at all points exactly, *cap a pe*, Appears before them, and with ſolemn march Goes ſlow and ſtately by them, thrice he walk'd Within their rapier's length; whilſt they (diſtill'd Almoſt to jelly with their fear) Stand dumb, and ſpeak not to him. This to me In dreadful ſecrecy impart they did, And I with him the third night kept the watch; Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time, Form of the thing, each word made true and good, The apparition comes

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My Lord, upon the platform where we [watch'd.

Ham. Did you ſpeak to it?

Hor. My Lord, I did; But anſwer made it none; yet once methought It liſted up its head, and did addreſs Itſelf to motion, like as it would ſpeak;

But even then the morning cock crew loud;
And at the ſound it ſhrunk in haſte away:
And vaniſh'd from our ſight.

Ham. 'Tis very ſtrange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd Lord, 'tis true:
And we did think it then our duty
To let you know it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, Sirs, but this troubles me:
Hold you the watch, to-night?

Both. We do, my Lord.

Ham. Arm'd, ſay you?

Both. Arm'd, my Lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Both. From head to foot.

Ham. Then ſaw you not his face?

Hor. O yes, my Lord, he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A count'nance more in ſorrow, than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Moſt conſtantly.

Ham. I would I had been there?

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like, ſtaid it long?

Hor. While one with mod'rate haſte might tell a hundred.

All. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I ſaw't.

Ham. His beard was griſly?

Hor. It was, as I have ſeen it in his life,
A ſable ſilver'd.

Ham. I'll watch to-night; perchance 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant you it will.

Ham. If it aſſume my noble father's perſon,
I'll ſpeak to it, tho' hell itſelf ſhould gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this ſight,
Let it be treble in your ſilence ſtill:
And whatſoever elſe may hap, to-night,
Give it an underſtanding, but no tongue;
I will require your loves. So fare you well.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve
I'll viſit you. [*Exeunt.*

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: farewel:
My father's ſpirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt ſome foul play; would the night were come!
Till then ſit ſtill my ſoul: foul deeds will riſe,
Tho' all the earth o'erwhelm them to men's eyes. [*Ex.*

Enter LAERTES *and* OPHELIA.

Laer. My neceſſaries are embark'd; farewel.
And, ſiſter, as the wind permits, pray
Let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For *Hamlet*, and the trifling of his favours,
Hold it a faſhion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth and prime of nature,
Forward, not permanent; tho' ſweet not laſting;
The perfume of a minute.

Oph. No more but ſo?

Laer. Think it no more:
He may not, as inferior perſons do,
Carve for himſelf; for on his choice depends
The ſanity and health of this whole ſtate.
Then weigh what loſs your honour may ſuſtain,
If with too cred'lous ear you hear his paſſion,
Fear it, *Ophelia*, fear it, my dear ſiſter:
* The chaſteſt maid is prodigal enough,
If ſhe unmaſk her beauty to the moon.

Oph. I ſhall th' effect of this good leſſon keep
About my heart: but, good my brother,
Do not, as ſome ungracious paſtors do,
Shew me the ſteep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilſt like a careleſs libertine,
Himſelf the primroſe path of dalliance treads.

Laer. Oh, fear me not.
I ſtay too long; but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Yet here? *Laertes!* get abroad, for ſhame,
The wind ſits in the ſhoulder of your ſail,
And you are ſtaid for.†

* The chaſteſt—is the coyeſt—the moſt cautious.

† The following lines, uſually omitted, ſhould certainly be retained:

——There;
My bleſſing with you,
And theſe few precepts in thy memory,

Laer. Moſt humbly I do take my leave, my Lord.
Farewel, *Ophelia*, and remember well
What I have ſaid to you.
Oph. 'Tis in my mem'ry lock'd,
And you yourſelf ſhall keep the key of it.
Laer. Farewel. [*Exit* Laer.
Pol. What is't, *Ophelia*, he ſaid to you?
Oph. So pleaſe you, ſomething touching the Lord
Pol. Marry, well bethought! [*Hamlet.*
'Tis told me he hath very oft of late
Giv'n private time to you; and you yourſelf
Have of your audience been moſt free and bounteous.
If it be ſo, (as ſo 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution) I muſt tell you,
You do not underſtand yourſelf ſo clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.
Oph. He hath, my Lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.
Pol. Affection! pugh! you ſpeak like a green girl,
Unſitted in ſuch perilous circumſtance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?
Oph. I do not know, my Lord, what I ſhould think.
Pol. Marry, I'll teach you; think yourſelf a baby,
That you have ta'en theſe tenders for your pay,
Which are not ſterling. Tender yourſelf more dearly;
Or you'll tender me a fool.

See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou haſt, and their adoption try'd,
Grapple them to thy ſoul with hooks of ſteel:
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade—beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,
Bear 't that th' oppoſer may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear; but few thy voice.
Take each man's cenſure; but reſerve thy judgment.
Coſtly thy habit, as thy purſe can buy,
But not expreſs'd in fancy—rich, but not gaudy.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be;
For loan oft loſes both itſelf and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of huſbandry.
This above all, to thine ownſelf be true;
And it muſt follow, as the night the day,
Thou canſt not then be falſe to any one.

Oph. My Lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable faſhion.
Pol. Ay, faſhion, you may call it: go to, go to.
Oph. And hath giv'n countenance to his ſpeech, my
With almoſt all the holy vows of heaven. [Lord,
Pol. Ay, ſpringes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the ſoul
Lends the tongue vows. This is for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you ſo ſlander any moment's leiſure,
As to give words to talk with the Lord *Hamlet*:
Look to't, I charge you; come your way.
Oph. I ſhall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The Platform before the Palace.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites ſhrewdly: it is very cold*.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is ſtruck.
Hor. I heard it not; then it draws near the ſeaſon,
Wherein the ſpirit held his wont to walk.
[*Trumpets a tune.*
What does this mean, my Lord?
Ham. The King doth wake, to-night, and take his
And as he takes his draught of rheniſh down, [rouſe,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus proclaim
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a cuſtom?
Ham. Ay, marry is't:
But to my mind, tho' I am a native here,
And to the manner born, it is a cuſtom
More honour'd in the breach than the obſervance.

Enter GHOST.

Hor. Look, my Lord, it comes!
Ham. Angels and miniſters of grace defend us!
Be thou a ſpirit of health, or goblin damn'd?
Bring with thee airs from heav'n, or blaſts from hell?
Be thy intent wicked or charitable?
Thou com'ſt in ſuch a queſtionable ſhape,

* This ſcene diverts our minds from the Ghoſt, till he returns with double force of impreſſion, and awful ſenſations.

That I will ſpeak to thee. I'll call thee *Hamlet*,
King, Father, Royal Dane: Oh! anſwer me,
Let me not burſt in ignorance; but tell
Why thy bones, hears'd in canonized earth,
Have burſt their cearments? Why the ſepulchre,
Wherein we ſaw thee quietly interr'd,
Hath ope'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To caſt thee up again? What may this mean?
That thou, dead corſe, again in complete ſteel,
Reviſiteſt thus the glimpſes of the moon,
Making night hideous; and us fools of nature,
So horribly to ſhake our diſpoſition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our ſouls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what ſhould we do?
[*Ghoſt beckons* Ham.

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it ſome impartment did deſire
To you alone.

Mar. Look with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means. [*holding* Hamlet.

Ham. It will not ſpeak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my Lord.

Ham. Why, what ſhould be the fear?
I value not my life;
And for my ſoul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itſelf?
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you tow'rd the flood, my Lord?
Or to the dreadful ſummit of the cliff,
And there aſſume ſome other horrid form,
And draw you into madneſs?

Ham. It waves me ſtill:
Go on, I'll follow thee—

Mar. You ſhall not go, my Lord.

Ham. Hold off your hand.

Hor. Be rul'd, you ſhall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty art'ry in this body,
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve:
Still am I call'd? unhand me, gentlemen—
[*Breaking from them.*

By heaven, I'll make a ghoſt of him that lets me—
I ſay, away—Go on—I'll follow thee.
[*Ex.* Ghoſt *and* Hamlet; Hor. *and* Mar. *retiring on the oppoſite ſide.*

Enter GHOST *and* HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further.
Ghoſt. Mark me.
Ham. I will.
Ghoſt. My hour is almoſt come,
When I to ſulph'rous and tormenting flames
Muſt render up myſelf.
Ham. Alas, poor Ghoſt!
Ghoſt. Pity me not, but lend thy ſerious hearing
To what I ſhall unfold.
Ham. What?
Ghoſt. I am thy father's ſpirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day, confin'd to faſt in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the ſecrets of my priſon-houſe,
I could a tale unfold, whoſe lighteſt word
Would harrow up thy ſoul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like ſtars ſtart from their ſpheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to ſtand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.
But this eternal blazon muſt not be
To ears of fleſh and blood; liſt, liſt, O liſt!
If thou didſt ever thy dear father love—
Ham. O Heaven!
Ghoſt. Revenge his foul and moſt unnat'ral murder.
Ham. Murder!
Ghoſt. Murder moſt foul, as in the beſt it is;
But this moſt foul, ſtrange, and unnatural.
Ham. Haſte me to know't, that I with wings as ſwift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May fly to my revenge.
Ghoſt. I find thee apt—Now, *Hamlet*, hear:
'Tis given out, that, ſleeping in my garden,
A ſerpent ſtung me: ſo the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged proceſs of my death
Rankly abus'd; for know, thou noble youth,

The ſerpent that did ſting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic ſoul! my uncle?

Ghoſt. Ay, that inceſtuous, that adulterate beaſt,
Won to his ſhameful luſt
The will of my moſt ſeeming virtuous queen.
O, *Hamlet*, what a falling off was there!
From me, whoſe love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whoſe nat'ral gifts were poor,
To thoſe of mine—
But ſoft, methinks I ſcent the morning air—
Brief let me be: Sleeping within my garden,
My cuſtom always in the afternoon,
Upon my ſecure hour thy uncle ſtole,
With juice of curſed hebonon in a phial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous diſtilment, whoſe effects
Hold ſuch an enmity with blood of man,
That ſwift as quickſilver it courſes thro'
The nat'ral gates and alleys of the body;
So did it mine.
Thus was I ſleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once bereſt;
Cut off ev'n in the bloſſom of my ſin,
Unhouſel'd, unanointed, unanneal'd;
No reck'ning made, but ſent to my account,
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O horrible! horrible! moſt horrible!

Ghoſt. If thou haſt nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury, and damned inceſt.
But, howſoever thou purſu'ſt this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy ſoul deſign
Againſt thy mother aught; leave her to heav'n,
And to thoſe thorns that in her boſom lodge,
To goad and ſting her. Fare thee well, at once!
The glow-worm ſhews the morning to be near,
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire*
Farewel; remember me.

* The idea of the glow-worm is very poetical; and the warning not to bear reſentment, inculcates a regard for the living, after nature's death is paid.

Ham. O hold, my heart—
And you, my ſinews, grow not inſtant old:
But bear me ſtrongly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor Ghoſt, while memory holds a ſeat
In this diſtracted globe; remember thee—
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All regiſter of books, all forms and preſſures paſt,
That youth and obſervation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone ſhall live,
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baſer matter. Yes, by heav'n:
O moſt pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, ſmiling damned villain!
My tables—meet it is I ſhould ſet down,
That one may ſmile, and ſmile, and be a villain;
At leaſt I'm ſure he may be ſo in Denmark. [*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are; now to my word:
It is, *farewel, remember me.*
I have ſworn it.

Hor. within. My Lord, my Lord!

Mar. within. Lord *Hamlet!*

Hor. within. Heaven ſecure him!

Ham. So be it.

Hor. within. Illo, ho, ho, my Lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy, come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble Lord?

Hor. What news, my Lord?

Ham. O wonderful!

Hor. Good, my Lord, tell it.

Ham. No, you'll reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my Lord.

Ham. How ſay you then, would heart of man once think it?—
But you'll be ſecret?

Both. As death, my Lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghoſt, my Lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you're in the right;
And ſo without more circumſtance at all
I hold it fit that we ſhake hands, and part:
You as your buſineſs and deſires ſhall point;

(For every man has buſineſs and deſire,
Such as it is)—and for my poor part,
I will go pray*. [Lord.
Hor. Theſe are but wild and windy words, my
Ham. I am ſorry they offend you, heartily.
Hor. There's no offence, my Lord.
Ham. Yes, by St. Patrick, but there is, *Horatio*,
And much offence, too. Touching this viſion, here—
It is an honeſt ghoſt, that let me tell you:
For your deſire to know what is between us,
O'er maſter't as you may: and now, good friends,
As you are friends, ſcholars, and ſoldiers,
Grant me one poor requeſt.
Hor. What is't, my Lord?
Ham. Never make known what you have ſeen to-
Both. My Lord, we will not. [night,
Ham. Nay, but ſwear't.
Hor. In faith, my Lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my Lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my ſword.
Hor. Propoſe the oath, my Lord.
Ham. Never to ſpeak of this you have ſeen—
Swear by my ſword.
Ghoſt, below. Swear. [ſtrange.
Hor. O day and night! but this is wondrous
Ham. And therefore as a ſtranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heav'n and earth, *Horatio*,
Than are dreamt of in our philoſophy. But come,
Here, as before, Never, ſo help you mercy,
How ſtrange or odd ſoe'er I bear myſelf,
(As I perchance hereafter ſhall think meet,
To put an antic diſpoſition on)
That you, at ſuch times ſeeing me, never ſhall,
With arms encumbered thus, or head thus ſhak'd,
Or by pronouncing of ſome doubtful phraſe,
As—well—we know—or, we could, an if we would—
Of ſuch ambiguous giving out, denote
That you know aught of me. This do ye ſwear,
So grace and mercy at your moſt need help you!
Ghoſt. Swear.
Ham. Reſt, reſt, perturbed ſpirit. So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you;

* Hamlet's dalliance with the natural curioſity of his friends, is well imagined: it varies action, and turns the main ſubject.

And what ſo poor a man as *Hamlet* is,
May do t'expreſs his love and friendſhip to you,
Shall never fail: Let us go in together;
And ſtill your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint: oh curſed ſpight,
That ever I was born to ſet it right! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *An Apartment in* POLONIUS's *Houſe.*

Enter OPHELIA, *meeting* POLONIUS.

Pol. HOW now, *Ophelia*, what's the matter?
Oph. O, my Lord, my Lord! I have been ſo af- [frighted—
Pol. With what?
Oph. My Lord, as I was reading in my cloſet,
Prince *Hamlet*, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
Pale as his ſhirt, his knees knocking each other—
Thus he comes before me.
Pol. Mad for thy love!
Oph. My Lord, I do not know,
But truly I do fear it.
Pol. What ſaid he?
Oph. He took me by the wriſt, and held me hard:
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow
He falls to ſuch peruſal of my face,
As he would draw it: that done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his ſhoulder turn'd,
He ſeem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out of doors he went, without their help,
And to the laſt bended their light on me*.
Pol. This is the very ecſtacy of love—
Have you given him any hard words of late?
Oph. No, my good Lord: but, as you did com- [mand,
I did repel his letters, and deny'd
His acceſs to me.
Pol. That hath made him mad:—
Come, go with me to the King,
This muſt be known.
Come, come away. [*Exeunt.*

* This is an exceeding pretty and ſignificant account of Hamlet's behaviour.

SCENE II. *The Palace.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRAUS, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Welcome, good *Roſencraus*, and *Guildenſtern*.
Beſides that we did long to ſee you,
The need we have to uſe you did provoke
Our haſty ſending. Something you have heard
Of *Hamlet*'s transformations; what it ſhould be,
More than his father's death,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
That you vouchſafe your reſt here in our court,
Some little time, ſo by your companies
To draw him on to pleaſures, and to gather
If aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you,
And ſure I am, two men are not living
To whom he more adheres: if it will pleaſe you,
So to employ your time with us a-while,
Your viſitation ſhall receive ſuch thanks,
As fits a King's remembrance.

Roſ. Both your Majeſties
Might, by the ſov'reign power you have o'er us,
Put your dread pleaſure more into command,
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourſelves in the full bent,
To lay our ſervice freely at your feet.

King. Thanks, *Roſencraus* and gentle *Guildenſtern*,

Queen. I do beſeech you inſtantly to viſit
My too much changed ſon. Go, ſome of you,
And bring theſe gentlemen where *Hamlet* is.

[*Exeunt* Roſ. *and* Guil.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Now I do think, or elſe this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy ſo ſure,
As it had us'd to do, that I have found
The very cauſe of *Hamlet*'s lunacy.

King. O ſpeak of that, that I do long to hear.

Pol. My Liege and Madam, to expoſtulate
What majeſty ſhould be, what duty is,

Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waſte night, day, and time.
Therefore, as brevity is the ſoul of wit,
And tediouſneſs the limbs and outward flouriſhes,
I will be brief: your noble ſon is mad,
Mad call I it; for to define true madneſs,
What is't but to be nothing elſe but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with leſs art.

Pol. Madam, I ſwear I uſe no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true; a fooliſh figure,
But farewel it, for I will uſe no art.
Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains
That we find out the cauſe of this effect,
Or rather ſay the cauſe of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cauſe;
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus. Conſider,
I have a daughter; have, while ſhe is mine,
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath giv'n me this: Now gather and ſurmiſe. [*Reads.*

To the celeſtial, and my ſoul's idol, the moſt beautified Ophelia: That's an ill phraſe, a vile phraſe; *beautified* is a vile phraſe; but you ſhall hear—*Thus in her excellent white boſom, theſe*, &c.

Queen. Came this from *Hamlet* to her?

Pol. Good madam, ſtay a-while, I will be faithful.

Doubt thou the ſtars are fire,
Doubt that the ſun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.

O *dear* Ophelia, *I am ill at theſe numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee beſt. O moſt beſt, believe it: Adieu. Thine evermore, moſt dear lady, while this machine is to him,* Hamlet.
This in obedience hath my daughter ſhewn me,
And more concerning his ſolicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place.

King. But how hath ſhe received his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove ſo; but what might you,
Or my dear Majeſty your Queen, here, think,
If I had play'd the deſk or table book,

Or look'd upon this love with idle ſight.
No, I went round to work,
And my young miſtreſs thus I charg'd:
Lord *Hamlet* is a Prince above thy ſphere,
This muſt not be: and then I precepts gave her,
That ſhe ſhould lock herſelf from his reſort,
Admit no meſſengers, receive no tokens;
Which done, ſhe took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repelled, a ſhort tale to make,
Fell to a ſadneſs, then into a weakneſs,
Thence to a lightneſs, and then by this declenſion,
Into the madneſs wherein he now raves,
And all we wail for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be very likely.

Pol. Hath there been ſuch a time (I'd fain know [that)
That I have poſitively ſaid that, 'tis ſo,
When it proved otherwiſe?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwiſe;
[*Pointing to his head and body.*
If circumſtances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, tho' it were hid indeed,
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it farther?

Pol. Sometimes he walks, for hours together,
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At ſuch a time, I'll looſe my daughter to him.
So pleaſe your Majeſty to hide yourſelf
Behind the arras, then
Mark the encounter; if he love her not,
And be not from his reaſon fall'n thereon,
Let me be no aſſiſtant for a ſtate,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET *reading.**

Queen. But look, where ſadly the poor wretch comes
Pol. Away, I do beſeech you both, away. [reading.
[*Exeunt* King *and* Queen.

* The idea of an aſſumed madneſs in Hamlet, is well conceived, as it occaſions a fine variation of character and action.

I'll board him, presently.
How does my good Lord *Hamlet?*

Ham. Excellent well.

Pol. Do you know me, my Lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my Lord.

Ham. Then I would you were as honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my Lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir, to be honest, as this world goes, Is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That is very true, my Lord.

Ham. For if the sun breeds maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion—have you a daughter!

Pol. I have, my Lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' th' sun! Conception is a blessing: but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't.

Pol. Still harping on my daughter! yet he knew [*Aside*] me not, at first, but said, I was a fishmonger; he is far gone; and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him, again. What do you read, my Lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my Lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean the matter that you read, my Lord?

Ham. Slanders, Sir; for the satyrical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber, and plumb-tree gum, and that they have a most plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams; all which Sir, though I most potently believe, yet I hold it not honestly to have it thus set down; for you yourself, Sir, shall grow old, as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward*.

Pol. Tho' this be madness, yet there's method in't: Will you walk out of the air, my Lord?

Ham. Into my grave.

Pol. Marry, that's out of the air, indeed: how pregnant his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on. My Lord, I will take my leave.

* Hamlet plays upon Polonius with great spirit, and much pleasant satirical perspecuity in this scene.

Ham. You cannot take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my Lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter GUILDENSTERN *and* ROSENCRAUS.

Pol. You go to seek Lord *Hamlet*, there he is. [*Ex.*

Ros. Save you, Sir.

Guild. My honoured Lord.

Ros. My dear Lord.

Ham. My excellent good friends! how dost thou, *Guilderstern?* ah, *Rosencraus!* good lads, how do you both? well, what news?

Ros. None, my Lord, but the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near; sure your news is not true? But, in the beaten way of friendship, what makes you at Elsinoor?

Ros. To visit you, my Lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks: but I thank you. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? come, come, deal with me: nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my Lord?

Ham. Any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my Lord?

Ham. Nay, that you must teach me; but let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowships, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal; be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no.

Ros. What say you?

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you; if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My Lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather: I have of late, but where I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent

canopy the air, this majeſtical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears nothing to me, but a foul and peſtilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is man*! how noble in reaſon! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how expreſs and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehenſion how like a God! the beauty of the world, the parogan of animals! and yet to me what is this quinteſſence of duſt? Man delights not me—nor woman neither; though by your ſmiling you ſeem to ſay ſo.

Roſ. My Lord, there was no ſuch ſtuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I ſaid, Man delights not me?

Roſ. To think, my Lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players ſhall receive from you: we met with them on the way, and hither are they coming, to offer you ſervice.

Ham. He that plays the king, ſhall be welcome; his majeſty ſhall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight ſhall uſe his foil and target; the lover ſhall not ſigh gratis; the humourous man ſhall end his part in peace; and the lady ſhall ſpeak her mind freely, or the blank verſe ſhall halt for't. What players are they?

Roſ. Even thoſe you were wont to take ſuch delights in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their reſidence both in reputation and profit were better, both ways. Do they hold the ſame eſtimation they did, when I was in the city? Are they ſo followed?

Roſ. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. It is not very ſtrange; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and thoſe that would make mouths at him, while my father lived, now give twenty, forty, fifty, nay a hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little: there is ſomething in this, more than natural, if philoſophy could find it out.

Guil. Shall we call the players, my Lord?

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elſinoor: your hands; th' appurtenance of welcome is faſhion and ceremony: but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

* We do not recolleſt to have met, in any author, a more conciſe or elegant panegyric on human nature, than this ſpeech contains.

Guil. In what, my dear Lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-weſt; when the wind is ſoutherly, I know a hawk from a hernſhaw.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen.

Ham. Hark you, *Guilderſtern* and *Roſencraus*, that great baby that you ſee there, is not yet out of his ſwadling-clouts.

Roſ. Haply is he the ſecond time come to them; for they ſay an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I propheſy that he comes to tell me of the players: mark it: you ſay right, Sir, a Monday morning, 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My Lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My Lord, I have news to tell you; when Roſcius was an actor in Rome—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my Lord.

Ham. Buz, buz.

Pol. Upon mine honour—

Ham. Then came each actor on his aſs—

Pol. The beſt actors in the world, either for Tragedy, Comedy, Hiſtory, Paſtoral, Paſtoral-Comical, Hiſtorical-Paſtoral; 'Scene undividual, or poem unlimited:' Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of wit and liberty, theſe are the only men.

Ham. O Jephtha judge of Iſrael, what a treaſure hadſt thou!

Pol. What treaſure had he, my Lord?

Ham. Why, one fair daughter, and no more; the which he loved paſſing well.

Pol. Still on my daughter! [*Aſide.*

Ham. Am not I i'th' right, old Jephtha?

Pol. If you call me Jephtha, my Lord, I have a daughter that I love paſſing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. Nay, what follows then, my Lord?

Ham. Why as by lot, God wot, 'and then you know, it came to paſs, as moſt like it was:' the firſt row of the rubrick will ſhew you more; for look where my abridgment comes.

Enter Players.

You are welcome, maſters. O my old friend! why thy face is valanced*, ſince I ſaw thee laſt; com'ſt thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and miſtreſs! marry, your ladyſhip is grown nearer to heaven that when I ſaw you laſt, by the altitude of a chopin †: I wiſh your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not crack'd within the ring. Maſters, you are all welcome, we'll e'en to't like friendly falconers, fly at any thing we ſee; we'll have a ſpeech ſtrait; come, give us a taſte of your quality; come, a paſſionate ſpeech.

Play. What ſpeech, my good Lord?

Ham. I heard thee ſpeak me a ſpeech once, but it was never acted: or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleaſed not the million; 'twas caviere to the multitude. One ſpeech in't I chiefly loved, 'twas Æneas's tale to Dido; and thereabout of it eſpecially, where he ſpeaks of Priam's ſlaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line, let me ſee, let me ſee—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanium beaſt—
Beaſt! no, that's not it, yet it begins with Pyrrhus.
The rugged Pyrrhus, he whoſe ſable arm,
Black as his purpoſe, did the night reſemble,
Old grandſire Priam ſeeks.

Pol. My Lord, well ſpoken, with good accent, and good diſcretion.

Ham. So proceed you.

Play. Anon he finds him,
Striking too ſhort at Greeks. His antique ſword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command; unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage ſtrikes wide,
But with the whiff and wind of his fell ſword
The unnerv'd father falls.
But as we often ſee, againſt ſome ſtorm,
A ſilence in the heav'ns, the rack ſtand ſtill,
The bold wind ſpeechleſs, and the orb below
As huſh as death: anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: ſo, after Pyrrhus' pauſe,

* Valanced—appears to mean, fringed with a beard.

† Chopin—in French, a pint; in Scotch, a quart: ſo that the prince ſays ſhe is taller by ſo much.

A rouſed vengeance ſets him new a-work:
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With leſs remorſe than Pyrrhus' bleeding ſword
Now falls on Priam.
Out, out, thou ſtrumpet Fortune!

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It ſhall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee, ſay on; he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he ſleeps. Say on, and come to Hecuba.

Play. But who, alas, had ſeen the mobled queen—

Ham. The mobled queen!

Pol. That's good. [the flames:

Play. Run bare foot, up and down, threatening
A clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem ſtood, and for a robe,
A blanket in th' alarm of fear caught up:
Who this had ſeen, with tongue in venom ſteep'd,
'Gainſt fortune's ſtate would treaſon have pronounc'd?

Pol. Look whether he has not turned his colour, and has tears in's eyes. Prithee no more.

Ham. 'Tis well, I'll have thee ſpeak out the reſt of this ſoon. Good my Lord, will you ſee the players well beſtowed? Do you hear? let them be well uſed, for they are the abſtract and brief chronicles of the time: after your death, you were better to have a bad epitaph, than their ill report, while you live.

Pol. My Lord, I will uſe them according to their deſert.

Ham. Much better; uſe every man, Sir, according to * his deſert, and who would eſcape whipping? Uſe them after your own honour and dignity. The leſs they deſerve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, Sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends; we'll have a play tomorrow. Doſt thou hear me, old friend? My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elſinoor.

Roſ. Farewel, my Lord. [*Exeunt* Roſ. *and* Guild.

* A more benevolent expreſſive ſentiment never dropped from the pen or mouth of any man, than this ſpeech turns upon.

Ham. Can you play the murder of Gonzago? [*To Player.*

Play. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night; you could for need study a speech of some dozen lines, which I would set down, and insert—could you not?

Play. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Very well; follow that Lord, and look you mock him not. [*Exeunt all but* Hamlet.

O what a wretch and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working all the visage warm'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his own conceit, and all for nothing—
For Hecuba?
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? what would he do,
Had he the motive and the ground for passion,
That I have? he would drown the stage with tears,
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ign'rant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears:
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall,
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. [lain!
"Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless vil-
"Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
"That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
"Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
"Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
"And fall a cursing, like a very drab, a scullion;
"fie, upon't! foh!
"About my brain! Hum!" I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene,
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions:
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak

With moſt miraculous organ*. I'll have theſe players
Play ſomething like the murder of my father,
Before my uncle. I'll obſerve his looks,
I'll tent him to the quick; if he look pale,
I know my courſe. The ſpirit that I have ſeen,
May be a devil, and the devil may have power
T'aſſume a pleaſing ſhape; yea, and perhaps,
Out of my weakneſs, and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with ſuch ſpirits,
Abuſes me, to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this; the play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conſcience of the King. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRAUS, GUILDENSTERN, *Gentlemen and Guards.*

King. AND can you by no drift of conference
Get from him why he puts on this confuſion?

Roſ. He does confeſs he feels himſelf diſtracted;
But from what cauſe, he will by no means ſpeak.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Roſ. Moſt civilly.

Guil. But with much forcing of his diſpoſition.

Roſ. Unapt to queſtion; but of our demands
Moſt free in his reply.

Queen. Did you invite him to any paſtime?

Roſ. Madam, it ſo fell out, that certain players
We o'ertook on the way; of theſe we told him,
And there did ſeem in him a kind of joy,
To hear of it; they're about the court,
And (as I think) they have already orders
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis moſt true:
And he beſeech'd me to intreat your Majeſties
To hear and ſee the matter.

King. With all my heart,
And it doth much content me,
To hear him ſo inclin'd:

* The idea that conſcience always haunts the guilty, eſpecially thoſe concerned in murder, is moſt certainly juſt, and properly introduced.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And urge him to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my Lord. [*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for *Hamlet* hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may meet
Ophelia here: her father and myself
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing and unseen,
We may of their encounter judge.

Queen. I shall obey you:
And, for my part, *Ophelia*, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of *Hamlet*'s wildness: so I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit* Queen.

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here, whilst we
(If so your Majesty shall please) retire conceal'd.

Oph. I hear him coming: retire, my Lord.
[*Exeunt* King *and* Pol.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. * To be, or not to be? that is the question.
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep—
No more; and by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand nat'ral shocks
That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;—
To sleep? perchance, to dream: ay, there's the rub:
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause:—There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,

* No author ever expressed so much philosophical reasoning in so narrow a compass, as in this excellent soliloquy, which gives a good orator great latitude for the exertion of his abilities; the doubts arising from that transition; the picture of life, which our uncertainty forces us to bear, are admirably conceived and expressed.

The insolence of office, and the spurns,
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his *quietus* make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To groan and sweat under a weary life?
But that the dread of some after death,
(That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
† No traveller returns) puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the healthful face of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard their currents turn away,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now.
The fair *Ophelia!* nymph, in thy orisons,
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my Lord, how do you.

Ham. I humbly thank you, well.

Oph. My Lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have long'd to re-deliver;
Pray you now receive them.

Ham. No, not I; I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd Lord, you know, right well, you did,
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd,
As made these things more rich: the perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha, are you honest?

Oph. My Lord!

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your Lordship?

Ham. That, if you be honest and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my Lord, have better commerce, than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is, to a bawd,

† It should seem as if Hamlet had surprisingly forgot the ghost; for if no traveller returns, how came that supernatural visitant in view? To save contradiction, we must admit the author means in a corporeal sense.

than the force of honesty can translate beauty into its likeness: this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my Lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believ'd me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I lov'd you not.

Oph. I was the more deceiv'd.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery: why should'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my back, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: what should such fellows, as I, do crawling between earth and heaven? we are arrant knaves, believe none of us; go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my Lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him,
That he may play the fool no where but in's own house;
Farewel.

Oph. O help him, you sweet heav'ns!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not 'scape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them; to a nunnery go.

Oph. Heav'nly powers restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings, well enough: nature hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, and you amble, and you lisp, you nickname heav'n's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to; I'll no more on't, it hath made me mad: I say, we will have no more marriages; those that are married already, all but one, shall live, the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go, go, go. [*Exit.*

Oph. O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The expectation and rose of the fair state,
Th' observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down,
And I of ladies most dejected and wretched,
Now see that noble and most sov'reign reason,

Like ſweet bells jangled out of tune, and harſh.
O woe is me!
T'have ſeen what I have ſeen, ſeeing what I ſee! [*Ex.*

Enter KING *and* POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
For what he ſpake, tho' it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madneſs.
He ſhall with ſpeed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
What think you on't?

Pol. It ſhall do well:
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his Queen-mother all alone entreat him,
To ſhew his grief; let her be round with him:
And I'll be plac'd (ſo pleaſe you) in the ear
Of all their conf'rence: if ſhe find him not,
To England ſend him, or confine him where
Your wiſdom beſt ſhall think.

King. It ſhall be ſo;
Madneſs in great ones muſt not unwatch'd go.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter HAMLET, *and three* Players.

Ham. Speak the ſpeech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly from the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier ſpoke my lines. And do not ſaw the air too much with your hand, thus; but uſe all gently; for in the very torrent, tempeſt, and, as I may ſay, whirlwind of paſſion, you muſt acquire and beget a temperance that you may give it ſmoothneſs. O! it offends me to the ſoul, to hear a robuſtious periwig-pated fellow tear a paſſion to very rags, to ſplit the ears of the groundlings; who, for the moſt part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb ſhews and noiſe: I would have ſuch a fellow whipp'd for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod. Pray you avoid it.

Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame, neither, but let your own diſcretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this ſpecial obſervance, that you o'er ſtep not the modeſty of nature; for any thing ſo o'erdone, is from the purpoſe of playing,

whose end, both at first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. O, there be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the action of Christian, nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

Play. I hope we have reformed that indifferently, with us.

Ham. O reform it, altogether: and let those that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.
What, ho! *Horatio?*

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, my Lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man,
As e'er my conversation met withal.

Hor. O my dear Lord!

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee?
Thou hast no revenue, but thy good spirits,
To feed and cloath thee*.
Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seel'd thee for herself: for thou hast been,
As one, in suffering all, hath suffer'd nothing;
Give me the man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

* It is cruel to leave out what follows:

——should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning——

In my heart's core; ay, in my heart of hearts,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.
There is a play, to-night, before the King;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee, of my father's death:
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act on foot,
Ev'n with the very comment of thy soul,
Observe my uncle: if then his occult guilt
Do not itself discover in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen.
Give him needful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And after we will both our judgments join,
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. I will, my Lord.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, *and Gentlemen.*

Ham. They are coming to the play, I must be idle. Get you a place.

King. How fare our cousin, *Hamlet?*

Ham. Excellent, 'faith,
Of the camelion's dish. I eat the air;
Promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, *Hamlet*; These words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor now mine, my Lord——
You play'd once in the university, you say. [*To Pol.*

Pol. That I did, my Lord, and was accounted a very good actor.

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar. I was kill'd i' th' capitol. Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf, there.
Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my Lord, they wait upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear *Hamlet*, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attrac-

Pol. O ho, do you mark that? [tive.

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

Oph. You are merry, my Lord.

Ham. Your only jig maker! what should a man do

but be merry? for look you, how chearfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, it is two months.

Ham. So long? nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten, yet! then there's hope a great man's memory may out-live his life, half a year; but he must build churches then.

Oph. What means the play, my Lord?

Ham. It is miching Mallico; it means mischief.

Oph. But what's the argument?

Enter PROLOGUE.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow;
The players cannot keep secret; they'll shew all.

Oph. Are they so good at shew, my Lord?

Ham. Aye, at any shew that you will shew them: be not you asham'd to shew, and they will not blush to tell you what it means. [play.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught, I'll mark the

Prol. *For us, and for our tragedy,*
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this the prologue, or the posey of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my Lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter PLAYER KING *and* QUEEN*.

Pl. King. Full thirty times has Phœbus' car gone round,
Since Love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands
Unite, in folding them in sacred bands.

Pl. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done,
But woe is me, you are so sick, of late,
And so far diff'rent from your former state,
That I distrust; yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my Lord, it nothing must.
Now what my love is, proofs have made you know;
And as my love is great, my fear is so;
Where love is great, the smallest doubts are fear;
Where little fear grows great, great love grows there.

Pl. King. I must leave thee, love, and shortly, too;
My working powers their functions leave to do;

* This scene of the mock play is properly much shortened.

But thou ſhalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd, and haply one as kind,
For huſband ſhalt thou ——

Pl. Queen. O, confound the reſt!
Such love muſt needs be treaſon in my breaſt;
In ſecond huſband let me be accurſt!
None wed the ſecond, but who kill'd the firſt.

Ham. That's wormwood! [ſpeak;

Pl. King. I do believe you think what now you
But what we do determine, oft we break;
What to ourſelves in paſſion we propoſe,
The paſſion ending, doth the purpoſe loſe:
Think ſtill thou wilt no ſecond huſband wed;
But thy thoughts die, when thy firſt lord is dead.

Pl. Queen. Nor earth, oh! give me food, nor heaven
Sport and repoſe from me, day and night! [light,
Both here and hence purſue me laſting ſtriſe,
If once I widow be, and then a wife!

Ham. If ſhe ſhould break it, now— [a while;

Pl. King. 'Tis deeply ſworn: ſweet, leave me here
My ſpirits grow dull, and fain would I beguile
The tedious day with ſleep. [*Sleeps.*

Pl. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come miſchance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you the play?

Queen. The lady doth proteſt too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but ſhe'll keep her word. [offence in't?

King. Have you heard the argument? is there no

Ham. No, no, they do but jeſt, poiſon in jeſt—no

King. What do they call the play? [offence.

Ham. The Mouſe-trap: marry, how? tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna. Gonzago is the King's name, his wife Baptiſta; you ſhall ſee anon, 'tis a knaviſh piece of work; but what of that? your Majeſty and we have free ſouls, it touches us not: let the galled jade winch, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one *Lucianus*, nephew to the Duke.

Oph. You are as good as a Chorus, my Lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love,

if I could see the puppets dallying—Come, begin, murtherer; leave thy damnable faces, and begin. The croaking raven doth bellow forth revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time
Confed'rate season, and no creature seeing; [agreeing,
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's bane, thrice blasted, thrice infected;
Thy nat'ral magic and dire property,
On wholsome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into his ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i'th' garden, for his estate; his name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian; you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

King. Give me some lights: away!

Pol. Give over the play. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but* Ham. *and* Hor.

Ham. Why let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungall'd go play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
Thus runs the world away.
O good *Horatio*, I'd take the Ghost's word for a thousand pounds. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my Lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Come, some music: the recorders. [*Exit* Hor.

Enter ROSENCRAUS *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Guil. Good my Lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The King—sir.

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distemper'd.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom will shew itself richer to signify this to the doctor; for me to put him to his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my Lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my business.

Ham. I am tame, sir, pronounce.

Guil. The Queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. Sir, you are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courteſy is not of the right breed. If it ſhall pleaſe you to make a wholeſome anſwer, I will do your mother's command; if not, your pardon, and my return, ſhall be the end of the buſineſs.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Roſ. What, my Lord?

Ham. Make you a wholeſome anſwer: my wit's diſeaſed. But, ſir, ſuch anſwer as I can make, you ſhall command; or rather, as you ſay, my mother.

Roſ. Then thus ſhe ſays: Your behaviour of late hath ſtruck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful ſon, that can thus aſtoniſh a mother! But is there no ſequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Roſ. She deſires to ſpeak to you in her cloſet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We ſhall obey, were ſhe ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Roſ. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do ſo ſtill, by theſe pickers and ſtealers.

Roſ. Good my Lord, what is the cauſe of your diſtemper? You do ſurely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Roſ. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himſelf, for your ſucceſſion in Denmark?

Enter HORATIO, *with Recorders.*

Ham. Ay, ſir, but while the graſs grows—the proverb is ſomething muſty.—Oh, the recorders; why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. Oh, my Lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well underſtand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My Lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I beſeech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my Lord.

Ham. 'Tis as eaſy as lying; govern theſe ventages

with your finger and thumb; give it breath with your mouth, and it will diſcourſe moſt excellent muſic: look you, theſe are the ſtops.

Guil. But theſe cannot I command to any utterance of harmony. I have not the ſkill.

Ham. Why look you, now, how unworthy a thing you make of me; you would play upon me; you would ſeem to know my ſtops; you would pluck out the heart of my myſtery; you would ſound me from my loweſt note, to the top of my compaſs; and there is much muſic, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it ſpeak. 'Sdeath, do you think I'm eaſier to be play'd on, than a pipe? call me what inſtrument you will, tho' you can fret me, you cannot play upon me *.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My Lord, the Queen would ſpeak with you.

Ham. Do you ſee yonder cloud, that's almoſt in ſhape of a camel?

Pol. 'Tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks 'tis like a weazel.

Pol. It is black like a weazel.

Ham. Or like a whale.

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother, by and by—they fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by.

Pol. I will ſay ſo. [*Exeunt.*

Ham. Leave me, friends.

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When church-yards yawn, and hell itſelf breathes out
Contagion to the world; now could I drink hot blood,
And do ſuch deeds, as day itſelf
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother!
O heart, loſe not thy nature! let not ever
The ſoul of Nero enter this firm boſom!
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will ſpeak daggers to her, but uſe none. [*Exit.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRAUS, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor ſtands it ſafe with us,
To let his madneſs range. Therefore prepare you;

* This is a maſterly turn of ſatire on court ſpies, and a fine rebuff to the mean ready agents of power.

For we will fetters put about this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.
Ros. We will make haste. [*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Sir, he is going to his mother's closet;
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant she'll tax him home,
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
Their speech. Fare you well, my liege;
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I hear. [*Exit.*
King. Thanks, dear my Lord.
Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to heav'n;
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray I cannot,
Tho' inclination be as sharp as 'twill;
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heav'ns,
To wash it white as snow? whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
Then I'll look up:
My fault is past. But oh! what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder!
My crown, mine own ambition, and my Queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain th' offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world.
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling; there the action lies
In its true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
Ev'n to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What, then! what rests?
Try what repentance can; what can it not?
Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?

O wretched ſtate! O boſom black as death!
O limed ſoul, that, ſtruggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels! make eſſay!
Bow, ſtubborn knees; and hearts with ſtrings of ſteel,
Be ſoft as ſinews of the new-born babe.
All may be well. [*Exit.*

Enter QUEEN *and* POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come ſtrait, look you lay home to him;
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath ſtood between
Much heat and him. I'll here conceal myſelf;
Pray you be round with him.

Queen. Withdraw, I hear him coming.
[Pol. *exit behind the arras.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. *Hamlet*, thou haſt thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you anſwer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you queſtion with a wicked one.

Queen. Why, how now, *Hamlet?*

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not ſo;
You are the Queen, your huſband's brother's wife;
And, would it were not ſo! you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll ſet thoſe to you that can ſpeak.

Ham. Come, come, ſit you down; you ſhall not budge;
You go not, till I ſet you up a glaſs,
Where you may ſee the inmoſt part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me? Help, hoa!

Pol. What hoa, help! [*Behind the arras.*

Ham. How now, a rat! dead for a ducat, dead.
[*Kills* Pol.

Pol. O! I am ſlain.

Queen. What haſt thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not: is it the King?

Queen. O what a raſh and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed, almoſt as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewel: [*To Pol.*
I took thee for thy betters; take thy fortune:
Thou find'st, to be too busy is some danger.
Leave wringing of your hands: peace, sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff:
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dost wag thy tongue,
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there: makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths: oh such a deed!
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words.
Ah me! that act!

Queen. Ah me! what act?

Ham. Look here upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers;
See what a grace was seated on this brow,
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten or command;
A station like the herald Mercury,
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form indeed,
Where every God did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband—Look now what follows.
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholsome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The heyday of the blood is tame, 'tis humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step, from this, to this?
O shame, where is thy blush?
Rebellious hell,
If thou can'st mutiny in a matron's bones,

To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire.
Queen. O *Hamlet*, ſpeak no more!
Thou turn'ſt mine eyes into my very ſoul.
Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank ſweat of an inceſtuous bed——
Queen. No more, ſweet *Hamlet.*
Ham. A murderer, and a villain!
A ſlave, that's not the twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent Lord: a vice of Kings;
A cutpurſe of the empire and the rule,
That from a ſhelf the precious diadem ſtole,
And put it in his pocket.

Enter GHOST *.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings, [figure?
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious
Queen. Alas, he's mad.
Ham. Do you not come your tardy ſon to chide,
That, laps'd in time and paſſion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command? O
Ghoſt. Do not forget: this viſitation [ſay!
Is but to whet thy almoſt blunted purpoſe,
But look! amazement on thy mother ſits:
O ſtep between her and her fighting ſoul!
Conceit in weakeſt bodies ſtrongeſt works.
Speak to her *Hamlet.*
Ham. How is it with you, madam?
Queen. Alas, how is't with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporeal air do hold diſcourſe?
Forth at your eyes your ſpirits wildly peep.
Whereon do you look? [glare!
Ham. On him! on him!——look you how pale he
His form and coarſe conjoin'd, preaching to ſtones,
Would make them capable. Don't look upon me,
Leſt with this piteous action you convert
My ſtern effects; then what I have to do,
Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.
Queen. To whom do you ſpeak this?
Ham. Do you ſee nothing, there?

* For ſtage action, the Ghoſt is moſt happily introduced here; its appearance enlivens the plot vaſtly, and relieves the ſcene very much.

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that's here, I see.
Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?
Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.
Ham. Why look you there; look, how it stalks
My father in his habit as he liv'd; [away!
Look where he goes, even now, out at the portal.
[*Exit* Ghost.
Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain.
Ham. My pulse, as yours, doth temp'rately keep time
And make as healthful music: 'tis not madness
That I have utter'd; bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Cannot do. Mother, for the love of grace,
Lay not this flatt'ring unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks;
Confess yourself to heav'n, repent what's past,
Avoid what is to come.
Queen. O *Hamlet!* thou hast cleft my heart.
Ham. Then throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good-night, but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
Once more, good-night!
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same Lord,
[*Pointing to* Pol.
I do repent; but heav'n has pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him; so again, good night!
I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind*.
[*Exit* Ham. *dragging out* Pol.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Royal Apartment.*

Enter KING *and* QUEEN.

King. THERE's matter in these sighs,
You must expound them:
How does *Hamlet?*

* There are about thirty lines lopped off the end of this scene, very justifiably.

Queen: Mad as the ſea and wind, when both con-
Which is the mightier; in his lawleſs fit, [tend
Behind the arras hearing ſomething ſtir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, A rat!
And in his braniſh apprehenſion, kills
The unſeen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been ſo with us, had we been there.
Where is he gone?

Queen To draw apart the body he hath kill'd.

King. Gertrude, come away;
The ſun no ſooner ſhall the mountains touch,
But we will ſhip him hence; and this vile deed
We muſt, with all our majeſty and ſkill,
Both count'nance and excuſe—Ho, *Guildenſtern!*

Enter ROSENCRAUS *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with ſome farther aid.
Hamlet in madneſs hath *Polonius* ſlain,
And from his mother's cloſet he hath dragg'd him:
Go ſeek him out, ſpeak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel; I pray you haſte in this.
Come, Gertrude. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely ſtow'd. [*Within.*] *Hamlet!* Lord *Hamlet!*
What noiſe? Who calls *Hamlet?* [body?

Roſ. What have you done, my Lord, with the dead

Ham. Compounded it with the duſt, whereto it is a kin.

Roſ. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Roſ. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counſel, and not my own; beſides, to be demanded of a ſponge, what replication ſhould be made by the ſon of a King?

Roſ. Take you me for a ſponge, my Lord?

Ham. Ay, ſir, that ſoaks up the King's countenace, his reward, his authorities: but ſuch officers do the King beſt ſervice in the end; he keeps them like an apple in the corner of his jaw, firſt mouth'd, to be laſt ſwallow'd: when he needs what you have

have glean'd, it is *but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my Lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My Lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the King.

Ham. Bring me to him. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KING *and* Gentlemen.

King. How dang'rous is it, that this man goes loose!
Yet must we not put the strong law upon him;
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, th'offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause; diseases desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
Or not at all.

Enter ROSENCRAUS *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. How now? What hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my Lord, We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my Lord, guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Hoa, bring in the Lord *Hamlet.*

Enter HAMLET *and* Guards.

King. Now, *Hamlet*, where's *Polonius?*

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper, where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten; a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.

King. Where is *Polonius?*

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'th'other place, yourself: but indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come.

* The sculking sycophants of royalty are here touched off with strict truth, and uncommon keeness.

King. *Hamlet*, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Must send thee hence;
Therefore prepare thyself,
The bark is ready, and the wind sits fair,
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, *Hamlet.*

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them; but come, for England: Farewel, dear mother!

King. Thy loving father, *Hamlet.*

Ham. My mother: father and mother are man and wife; man and wife are one flesh; and so my mother. Farewel, mother! Come, for England! [*Exit.*

King. Follow him,
Tempt him with speed aboard;
Away, for every thing is seal'd and done,
And, England! if my present love thou hold'st at aught,
Let it be testify'd in *Hamlet's* death. [*Exit.*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, *and a* Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate,
Indeed distracted, and deserves your pity.

Queen. I will not speak with her. [strew

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoke with, for she may
Dang'rous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

Queen. Let her come in.

Enter OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous Majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, *Ophelia?* [*She sings.*

Oph. *How should I your true love know from another one?*
By his cockle hat and staff, and his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imparts this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark: [Sings.
He is dead and gone, lady, he is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf, at his heels a stone.

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia—

Oph. Pray you mark:
White his shroud as the mountain snow,
Larded all with sweet flowers,
Which bewept to the grave did go
*With true love-showers**.

* The transitions of the young lady's frenzy are well conceived for representation, and render her a very interesting object.

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas! look here, my lord!

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God yield you! they say the owl was a baker's daughter. We know what we are, but we know not what we may be.

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray let's have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say this:

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's *day,* [Sings.
All in the morn betime;
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

King. Pretty *Ophelia!* [on't.

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end

Then up he arose, and don'd his clothes, and op'd his chamber door,
Let in the maid, that out a maid, never departed more.

King. How long has she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well; we must be patient; but I cannot chuse but weep, to think they should lay him i'th'cold ground: my brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel ——— Come, my coach; good night, ladies, good night; Sweet ladies, good-night, good-night.

King. Follow her close, give her good watch, I pray you. This is the poison of deep grief; it springs All from her father's death. [*A noise within.*

Enter Gentlemen.

Gen. Save yourself, my Lord.
Young *Laertes*, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers; the rabble call him Lord;
They cry, Chuse we *Laertes* for our King;
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be King, *Laertes* King! [*A noise within.*

Laer. [*within.*] Where is the King? Sirs, stand you all without.

Enter LAERTES.

O thou vile King! give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good *Laertes.*

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm, proclaims me baſtard.
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot,
Ev'n here, between the chaſte unſmirched brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cauſe, *Laertes*,
That thy rebellion looks ſo giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude: do not fear our perſon;
There's ſuch divinity doth hedge a king,
That treaſon dare not reach at what it would.
Let him go, Gertrude.

Laer. Where's my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell, allegiance! vows to the blackeſt devil!
To this point I ſtand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what will; only I'll be reveng'd
Moſt thoroughly for my father.

King. Who ſhall ſtay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world:
And for my means, I'll huſband them ſo well,
They ſhall go far with little.

King. Will you, in revenge of your
Dear father's death, deſtroy both friend and foe?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them, then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I ope my arms,
And, like the life-rend'ring pelican,
Relieve them with my blood.

King. Why, now you ſpeak
Like a true gentleman.
That I am guiltleſs of your father's death,
And am moſt ſenſible in grief for it,
It ſhall as level to your judgment lie,
As day does to your eye.

Hor. (within) O poor *Ophelia!*

Laer. Let her come in.

Enter OPHELIA.

O roſe of May!
Dear maid, kind ſiſter, ſweet *Ophelia!*

O heav'ns! is't poſſible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as a ſick man's life?

Oph. *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier,* [Sings.
And in his grave rain'd many a tear.

Laer. Hadſt thou thy wits, and didſt perſuade revenge, it could not move thus.

Oph. You muſt ſing, down-a-down. [comes it!
And you call him a-down-a. O how the wheel be-
It is the falſe ſteward that ſtole his maſter's daughter.

Laer. This nothing is much more, than matter.

Oph. There's roſemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there's pancies, that's for thoughts. [membrance fitted.

Laer. A document in madneſs! thoughts and re-

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you, and here's ſome for me. We may call it herb of grace, o'Sundays: O you may wear your rue with a difference. There's a daiſy; I would give ſome violets, but they withered all when my poor father died. They ſay he made a good end.

For bonny ſweet Robin *is all my joy.* [Sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction, paſſion, hell itſelf! She turns to favour, and to prettineſs.

Oph. *And will he not come again?*
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead, gone to his death-bed,
He never will come again.
His beard was white as ſnow,
All flaxen was his poll;
He is gone, he is gone, and we caſt away moan;
And peace be with his ſoul, and with all lovers
*ſouls**. [Exit.

King. Laertes, I muſt ſhare in your grief,
Or you deny me right: go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wiſeſt friends you will,
And they ſhall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct, or by collat'ral hand,
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give
To you in ſatisfaction: but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us;
And we ſhall jointly labour with your ſoul,
To give it due content.

* Making Ophelia ſing ſo frequently, ſo disjointly, and ſuiting the words ſo ſtrictly to her ſituation, ſhew great judgment.

Laer. Let this be ſo.
His means of death, his obſcure funeral,
No trophy, ſword, or hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal oſtentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from earth to heaven,
That I muſt call't in queſtion.

King. So you ſhall;
And where th' offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HORATIO *and Gentleman.*

Hor. What are they that would ſpeak with me?

Gent. Sea-faring men, ſir; they ſay they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in,
I do not know what part of the world,
I ſhould be greeted, if not from Lord *Hamlet.*

Enter two Sailors.

1 *Sail.* Save you, ſir.

2 *Sail.* Here are letters for you, ſir: if your name be *Horatio,* as we are informed it is.

HORATIO *reads the letter.*

'*Horatio*, when thou ſhalt have overlooked this, 'give theſe fellows ſome means to the King; they 'have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at 'ſea, a pirate of very warlike appointment, gave us 'chace; finding ourſelves too ſlow of ſail, we put on 'a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded 'them: on the inſtant they got clear of our ſhip, and 'ſo I alone became their priſoner. They have dealt 'with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what 'they did. I am to do a turn for them. Let the 'King have the letters I have ſent, and repair thou 'to me, with as much ſpeed as thou wouldſt fly death. 'I have words to ſpeak in thine ear will make thee 'dumb, yet are they much too light for the matter. 'Theſe good fellows will bring thee where I am.— '*Roſencraus* and *Guildenſtern* hold their courſe for Eng-'land. Of them I have much to tell thee. Farewel.

HAMLET.'

Come, I will make you way for theſe your letters;

And do't the ſpeedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KING *and* LAERTES.

King. Now muſt your conſcience my acquittance ſeal,
And you muſt put me in your heart for a friend;
Since you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he who hath your noble father ſlain,
Purſu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears. But tell me,
Why you proceed not againſt theſe crimes,
So capital in nature.

King. For two ſpecial reaſons,
Which may perhaps to you ſeem weak,
But yet to me they're ſtrong. The Queen, his mother,
Lives almoſt by his looks.
The other motive,
Why to a public court I might not go,
Is the great love the people bear him,
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the ſpring that turneth wood to ſtone,
Convert his gyves to graces.

Laer. And ſo I have a noble father loſt,
A ſiſter driven into deſperate terms,
Whoſe worth, if praiſes may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your ſleep for that: you muſt not think
That we are made of ſtuff ſo flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be ſhook with danger,
And think it paſtime: you ſhall ſoon hear more,
I lov'd your father, and we love ourſelf.

Enter a Meſſenger.

How now! what news?

Meſſ. Letters, my Lord, from *Hamlet.* Theſe to your majeſty; this to the Queen.

King. From *Hamlet?* Who brought them?

Meſſ. Sailors, my Lord.

King. *Laertes*, you ſhall hear them: leave us.

[*Exit Meſſ.*

'High and Mighty, you ſhall know I am ſet naked
'on your kingdom. To-morrow ſhall I beg leave to

'see your kingly eyes; when I shall (first asking your
'pardon) thereunto recount the occasion of my sud-
'den and most strange return'
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?
Laer. Know you the hand?
King. 'Tis *Hamlet*'s character. Naked!
And in a postscript here, he says, alone:
Can you advise me?
Laer. I'm lost in't, my Lord, but let him come.
It warms the very sickness of my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus didst thou.
King. If it be so, *Laertes*,
Will you be ruled by me? [peace.
Laer. Ay, my Lord, so you will not over-rule me to a
King. To thine own peace: if he be now return'd,
As liking not his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not chuse but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it accident.
Laer. My Lord, I will be rul'd,
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the instrument.
King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in *Hamlet*'s hearing, for a quality,
Wherein they say you shine.
Laer. What part is that, my Lord?
King. A very feather in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy:
He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cry'd out, 'Twould be a sight indeed,
To see *Laertes* match'd. The fencers of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
Did *Hamlet* so envenom with his envy,

That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming over to play with him.
Now out of this—

Laer. What out of this, my Lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father.
But to the business:
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake
To shew yourself indeed your father's son,
More than by words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' th' church.

King. No place indeed should shield a murderer,
Revenge should have no bounds: but, good *Laertes*,
Keep close within your chamber;
Hamlet return'd, shall know you are come home;
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you: bring you, in fine, together,
And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may chuse,
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father's death*.

Laer. I'll do't;
And for the purpose I'll anoint my sword:
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue,
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this;
I hav't—when in your motion you are hot,
And make your bouts more violent to that end,

* This treacherous plot on the life of Hamlet, is truly villainous on the part of his Majesty, and pitifully mean in Laertes, though he has lost a father; no revenge can be just, that is not manlike.

And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him,
A chalice for the purpoſe: whereon but taſting,
If he by chance eſcape your venom'd ſword,
It ſhall be death.

Enter QUEEN.

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So faſt they follow: your ſiſter's drown'd, *Laertes.*

Laer. Drown'd! O where?

Queen. There is a willow growing o'er a brook,
That ſhews his hoary leaves i' the glaſſy ſtream,
Near which fantaſtic garlands ſhe did make
Of crow flow'rs, nettles, daiſies, and long purples;
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clamb'ring to hang, an envious ſliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herſelf,
Fell in the weeping brook.

Laer. Too much of water haſt thou, poor *Ophelia*,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet
It is our trick. Nature her cuſtom holds,
Let ſhame ſay what it will. Adieu, my Lord!
I have a fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter two GRAVE-DIGGERS*.

1 *Grave.* Is ſhe to be buried in Chriſtian burial, when ſhe wilfully ſeeks her own ſalvation?

2 *Grave.* I tell thee ſhe is; therefore make her grave ſtraight; the crowner hath ſat on her, and finds it Chriſtian burial.

1 *Grave.* How can that be, unleſs ſhe drowned herſelf in her own defence?

2 *Grave.* Why 'tis found ſo.

1 *Grave.* It muſt be *ſe offendendo*, it cannot be elſe. For here lies the point; if I drown myſelf wittingly,

* Theſe gentry, and their quibbling humour, certainly treſpaſs upon decorum; but the moral reflections occaſioned by the grave, &c. make ample amends.

it argues an act; and an act hath three branches: it is to act, to do, and to perform; *argal*, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Grave.* Nay, but hear you, Goodman Delver.

1 *Grave.* Give me leave; here lies the water, good; there stands the man, good; if the man go to the water, and drown himself, it is will he, nil he, he goes; mark you that; but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: *argal*, he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Grave.* But is this law?

1 *Grave.* Ay marry is't, crowner's quest-law.

2 *Grave.* Will you have the truth on't? if this had not been a gentlewoman, she would have been buried without Christian burial.

1 *Grave.* Why, there thou saidst; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in the world, to drown or hang themselves, more than we. Come, my spade; there is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-diggers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Grave.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Grave.* He was the first that ever bore arms. I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Grave.* Go to.

1 *Grave.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Grave.* The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Grave.* I like thy wit well; the gallows does well: but how does it well? It does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church: *argal*, the gallows may do well for thee. To't again, come.

2 *Grave.* Who builds stronger than the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

1 *Grave.* Ay, tell me that, or unyoke.

2 *Grave.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Grave.* To't.

2 *Grave.* Mass, I cannot tell.

1 *Grave.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not amend his pace with beating; and when thou art asked this question next, say, a

grave-digger. The houſes he makes laſt till doomſday.

Go, get thee in, and fetch me a ſtoup of liquor.

[*Exit 2d Grave.*

In youth when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very ſweet;
To contract, O, the time for, ah, my behove;
O, methought there was nothing ſo meet.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling in his buſineſs, that he ſings at grave-making? [eaſineſs.

Hor. Cuſtom hath made it in him a property of

Ham. 'Tis even ſo, the hand of little employment hath the daintier ſenſe.

Grave. *But age with ſtealing ſteps*
Hath claw'd me in his cluch;
And hath ſhipp'd me into the land,
As if I had never been ſuch.

Ham. That ſcull had a tongue in't, and could ſing, once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere Cain's jaw-bone, that did the firſt murder! This might be the pate of a politician; might it not?

Hor. It might, my Lord.

Ham. Did theſe bones coſt no more the breeding, but to play at loggers with them? Mine ache to think on't.

Grave. *A pick-ax and a ſpade, a ſpade,*
For—and a ſhrowding ſheet!
O, a pit of clay—for to be made,
For ſuch a gueſt is meet.

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the ſcull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities, now? his quillities? his caſes? his tenures and his tricks? Why does he ſuffer this rude knave to knock him about the ſconce, with a dirty ſhovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? I will ſpeak to this fellow. Whoſe grave's this, ſirrah?

Grave. Mine, ſir—

O, a pit of clay, &c. [*Sings.*

Ham. I think it's thine, indeed; for thou lieſt in't.

Grave. You lie out on't, ſir, and therefore 'tis not your's: for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou doſt lie in't, to be in't, and ſay it is

thine; 'tis for the dead, and not for the quick; therefore thou lieſt. [to you.

Grave. 'Tis a quick lie, ſir; 'twill away again from me

Ham. What man doſt thou dig it for?

Grave. For no man, ſir.

Ham. What woman, then?

Grave For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

Grave. One that was a woman, ſir; but, reſt her ſoul! ſhe's dead.

Ham. How abſolute the knave is! We muſt ſpeak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long haſt thou been a grave-maker?

Grave. Of all the days i' th' year, I came to't that day our laſt king *Hamlet* overcame *Fortinbras*.

Ham. How long is that ſince?

Grave. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that; it was that very day that young *Hamlet* was born, he that is mad, and ſent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry; why was he ſent into England?

Grave. Becauſe he was mad; he ſhall recover his wits there; or if he don't, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

Grave. 'Twill not be ſeen in him there; they are all as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

Grave. Very ſtrangely, they ſay.

Ham. How ſtrangely?

Grave. Faith, e'en with loſing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

Grave. Why, here, in Denmark; where I have been ſexton, man and boy, thirty years. [rot?

Ham. How long will a man lie i'th' earth, ere he

Grave. Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will laſt you ſome eight or nine years: a tanner now, will laſt you nine years.

Ham. Why he more than another?

Grave. Why, ſir, his hide is ſo tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water, a great while; and your water is a ſore decayer of your whoreſon dead body: here's a ſcull now, hath lain i'th' earth three-and-

Ham. Whoſe was it? [twenty years.

Grave. A whoreſon mad fellow's it was; whoſe do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

Grave. A peſtilence on him for a mad rogue! he poured a flaggon of rheniſh on my head once: this ſame ſcull, ſir, was Yorick's ſcull, the King's jeſter.

Ham. This?

Grave. Even that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him well, *Horatio*; a fellow of infinite jeſts; of moſt excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thouſand times: here hung thoſe lips that I have kiſſed, I know not how oft. Where be your gibes, now? your jeſts? your ſongs? your flaſhes of merriment, that were wont to ſet the table in a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? Quite chop fallen! Now get you to my lady's table, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this complexion ſhe muſt come at laſt; make her laugh at that.

Pr'ythee, *Horatio*, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my Lord? [i th' earth?

Ham. Doſt thou think Alexander looked o'this faſhion

Hor. Even ſo.

Ham. And ſmelt ſo? pah. [*Smelling to the ſcull.*

Hor. Even ſo, my Lord.

Ham. To what baſe uſes may we return, *Horatio!* Why may not imagination trace the noble duſt of Alexander, till we find it ſtopping a bung hole?

Hor. 'Twere to conſider too curiouſly, to conſider ſo.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither, with modeſty enough, and likelihood to lead it, as thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to duſt; the duſt is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not ſtop a beer-barrel?

Imperial Cæſar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might ſtop a hole, to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw*!

* Read this ſpeech, titled Pomp, with due attention, and ſhrink into thy original nothingneſs.

Scene draws, and discovers the KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, *and* PRIEST, *with a Corse.*

But soft, but soft a while, here comes the King,
The Queen, and all the court. Who's this they follow,
And with such maim'd rites? This doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Destroy its own life; 'twere of some estate;
Stand by, a while, and mark.

Laer. What ceremony, else?

Ham. That is *Laertes*, a very noble youth.

Laer. What ceremony, else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd,
As we have warrantry; her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctify'd be lodg'd:
For charitable prayers,
Flints and pebbles should be thrown upon her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rites,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home,
Of bell and burial*.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more;
We should prophane the service of the dead,
To sing a *Requiem*, and such rest to her,
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' th' earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministring angel shall my sister be,
When thou ly'st howling.

Ham. What, the fair *Ophelia!*

Queen. Sweets to the sweet, farewel!
[*Throws in a garland of flowers.*
I hop'd thou should'st have been my *Hamlet*'s wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O treble woe,
Fall ten times double on that curs'd head,
Whose wicked deeds depriv'd thee of

* This punishment of suicide, and the idea of consecrated ground, shew that Shakespeare meant this for a Christian priest, diametrically opposite to the opinion of Warburton.

Thy moſt ingenious ſenſe! Hold off the earth, a while,
Till I have caught her once more in my arms:
[*Leaps into the grave.*
Now pile your duſt upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
T' o'ertop old Pelion, or the ſkyiſh head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. What is he, whoſe griefs
Bear ſuch an emphaſis? Whoſe phraſe of ſorrow
Conjures the wand'ring ſtars, and makes them ſtand,
Like wonder-wounded hearers? It is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*

Laer. Perdition catch thee! [*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'ſt not well.
I pr'ythee take thy fingers from my throat—
For though I am not ſplenetive and raſh,
Yet have I in me ſomething dangerous,
Which let thy wiſdom fear—hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them aſunder.

Ham. Why, I'll fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eye-lids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my ſon! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd *Ophelia*; forty thouſand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my ſum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, *Laertes.*

Ham. Shew me what thou wilt do.
Wilt weep? Wilt fight? Wilt faſt? Wilt tear thyſelf?
Wilt drink up eiſel? Eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Doſt thou come hither but to whine?
To out-face me with leaping in her grave?
Be bury'd quick with her; and ſo will I.
And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singing his pate againſt the burning zone,
Make Oſſa like a wart! nay, and thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madneſs;
And thus a while the fit will work on him:
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When firſt her golden couplets are diſclos'd,
His ſilence will ſet drooping.

Ham. Hear you, ſir;
What is the reaſon that you uſe me thus?

I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter—
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, the dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray thee, good *Horatio*, wait upon him.
[*Exit* Hor.

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech.
[*To* Laertes.

We'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument. [*Exeunt.*

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this.
Do you remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my Lord?

Enter OSRICK.*

Osr. Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir,
Dost know this waterfly?

Hor. No, good my Lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him.

Osr. Sweet Lord, if your Lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you, from his Majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: your bonnet to its right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your Lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, it is very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my Lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion—

Osr. Exceedingly, my Lord, it is very sultry, as 'twere I cannot tell how—my Lord, his Majesty bid me signify unto you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: sir, this is the matter—

* This foppling, whose character, as well as business, we dislike, may be sufficiently supported by smartness of figure, pertness of delivery, and affectedness of gesticulation; Mr. Garrick has rejected him: indeed, as Shakespeare says, he speaks an infinite deal of nothing.

Ham. I beſeech you, ſir, remember.

Oſr. Nay, good my Lord, for my eaſe—Sir, here is newly come to court, *Laertes*; believe me, an abſolute gentleman, full of moſt excellent differences, of very ſoft ſociety, and great ſhew: indeed, to ſpeak feelingly of him, he is the very card or kalendar of gentry; for you ſhall find in him the ſubſtance of what part a gentleman would ſee.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Oſr. Of *Laertes?*

Ham. Of him, ſir.

Oſr. You are not ignorant of what excellence *Laertes* is.

Ham. I dare not confeſs that, leſt I ſhould compare with him in excellence; for to know a man well, were to know himſelf.

Oſr. I mean, ſir, for his weapon.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Oſr. Single rapier.

The King, ſir, hath wagered with him ſix Barbary horſes, againſt the which he has impawned, as I take it, ſix French rapiers and poignards, with their affigns, as girdle, hanger, and ſo—three of the carriages are very dear to fancy, very reſponſive to the hilts, moſt delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Oſr. The carriages, ſir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phraſe would be more germain to the matter, if we carried cannon by our ſides.

Oſr. The king hath laid, ſir, that in a dozen paſſes between yourſelf and him, he ſhall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid twelve to nine, and it would come to immediate trial, if your Lordſhip would vouchſafe the anſwer.

Ham. How if I anſwer no?

Oſr. I mean, my lord, the oppoſition of your perſon in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it pleaſe his Majeſty, it is the breathing time of the day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpoſe, I will win for him if I can; if not, I ſhall gain nothing but my ſhame, and the odd hits.

Oſr. Shall I deliver it ſo?

Ham. To this effect, ſir, after what flouriſh your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your Lordſhip. [*Exit.*

Hor. You will loſe, my Lord.

Ham. I do not think ſo; ſince he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I ſhall win at the odds. Thou would'ſt not think how ill all's here, about my heart; but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my Lord.

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is ſuch a kind of boding, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind diſlike any thing, obey it: I will foreſtal their coming hither, and ſay you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury. [*Exeunt.*

Scene draws, and diſcovers KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Gentlemen, *and Guards. Re-enter* HAMLET *and* HORATIO.*

King. Come, *Hamlet*, come, and take this hand from me. [*Preſenting* Laertes.

Ham. Give me your pardon, ſir; I've done you wrong;
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman: this preſence knows,
And you muſt needs have heard, how I am puniſh'd
With a ſore diſtraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madneſs.
Let my diſclaiming from a purpos'd evil,
Free me ſo far in your moſt gen'rous thoughts,
That I have ſhot mine arrow o'er the houſe,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am ſatisfied in nature,
Whoſe motive in this caſe, ſhould ſtir me moſt
To my revenge.
I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it, freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly pay.
Give us the foils.

Laer. Come, one for me.

* We think the laſt ſcene of this play very reprehenſible, as it teems with ſlaughter.

Ham. I'll be your foil, *Laertes*; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall like a star i' th' darkest night appear.
Laer. You mock me, sir.
Ham. No, on my honour.
King. Give them the foils, young *Osrick*. Cousin *Hamlet*, you know the wager.
Ham. Very well, my Lord:
Your Grace has laid the odds o' th' weaker side.
King. I do not fear it, I have seen you both;
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.
Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.
Ham. This likes me well: these foils have all a length?
Osr. Ay, my good Lord.
King. Give me a bowl of wine.
If *Hamlet* give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire:
The King shall drink to *Hamlet*'s better breath:
And in the cup an onyx shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups,
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpets to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heav'ns, the heav'n to earth:
Now the King drinks to *Hamlet*. Come, begin;
[*Trumpets the while.*
And you the judges bear a wary eye.
Ham. Come on, sir.
Laer. Come, my Lord.
Ham. One.
Laer. No.
Ham. Judgment.
Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit. [*Drums, trumpets, and shout.*
Laer. Well—again. [*Flourish, a piece goes off.*
King. Stay, give me the drink. *Hamlet*, this pearl is thine. Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.
Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by, a while.
Come—another hit—what say you? [*They play.*
Laer. I do confess't.
King. Our son shall win.
Queen. The Queen salutes thy fortune, *Hamlet*.
Ham. Good madam—
King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I have, my Lord; I pray you pardon me.
King. It is the poiſon'd cup, it is too late. [*Aſide.*
Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.
Laer. I'll hit him now. And yet it is almoſt againſt my conſcience. [*Aſide.*
Ham. Come, for the third; *Laertes*, you but dally; I pray you preſs with your beſt violence,
I'm ſure you make a wanton of me.
Laer. Say you ſo? Come on. [*Play.*
[Laertes *wounds* Hamlet; *then in ſcuffling they change rapiers, and* Hamlet *wounds* Laertes.
King. Part them, they are incens'd.
Ham. Nay, come again.
Oſr. Look to the Queen there, ho!
Hor. How is it, my Lord?
Oſr. How is't, *Laertes?*
Laer. Why, as a woodcock caught in mine own ſpringe; I'm juſtly killed with mine own treachery.
Ham. How does the Queen?
King. She ſwoons to ſee them bleed. [*Hamlet!*
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink—O my dear
The drink, the drink—I am poiſon'd. [*She dies.*
Ham. O villainy! hoa! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! ſeek it out.
Laer. It is here. *Hamlet*, thou art ſlain!
No medicine in the world can do thee good:
In thee there is not half an hour of life:
The treach'rous inſtrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itſelf on me. Lo! here I lie,
Never to riſe again: thy mother's poiſon'd;
I can no more—the King, the King's to blame.
Ham. The point envenom'd too? Then, venom, do thy work. [*Stabs the King.*
Here, thou inceſtuous Dane;
Follow my mother. [*King dies.*
Laer. He's juſtly ſerv'd: it is a poiſon temper'd by himſelf.
Exchange forgiveneſs with me, noble *Hamlet*;
Mine and my father's death come not on thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*
Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
Wretched Queen, farewel!
You that look pale, and tremble at this chance,

That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time (as this fell ſergeant Death
Is ſtrict in his arreſt) O! I could tell you—
But let it be—*Horatio*, I am dying.
Thou liv'ſt; report me and my cauſe aright,
To the unſatisfy'd.

Hor. Never believe it:
I'm more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here's yet ſome liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup; let go, I'll have't.
O good *Horatio*, what a wounded name,
Things ſtanding thus unknown, ſhall live behind me.
If thou did'ſt ever hold me in thy heart,
Abſent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harſh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my ſtory.—O! I die, *Horatio*:
The potent poiſon quite o'ergrows my ſpirit;
I cannot live to hear the news from England,
But I do prophecy, th' election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice,
So tell him with th' occurrents more or leſs,
Which have ſolicited. O—the reſt is ſilence. [*Dies.*

Hor. There crack'd the cordage of a noble heart.
Good night, ſweet Prince;
And choirs of angels ſing thee to thy reſt.
Take up the bodies; ſuch a ſight as this,
Becomes the field, but here ſhews much amiſs. [*Exeunt.*

* As the play is cut, theſe five lines ſhould, we think, be omitted; for they are unintelligible to all thoſe who remember the original play, and are quite unneceſſary here, and foreign to the repreſentation, as it now ſtands.

THE END.

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